

REMARKS

Claims 61, 63-69, 71-74, and 78-85 are now pending. Claims 84 and 85 were added. Claim 84 is substantially similar to deleted Claim 58 and support for claim 85 is found in the examples. Claim 58 was inadvertently deleted; the cited reference doesn't disclose the deletion of a prpA-D operon. Applicants gratefully acknowledge that claims 61, 63-69, 71-74, 78, 80, 81, and 83 are allowed. The remaining claims, claims 79 and 82, are objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. The phrases "according to claim 61" and "according to claim 69" have been deleted from claims 79 and 82, respectively, thus overcoming this objection.

In addition, the title has been amended as kindly suggested by the Examiner, but takes into account the subject matter of new Claim 84.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

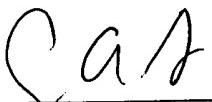
In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.

286002021100. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to

the Deposit Account.

Dated: December 27, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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